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Where We Meet Jesus

Luke 11:1-4

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- **Christianity is the most materialistic of any religion - here we are told to ask boldly for bread**
- **We ask because Jesus told us to ask**
- **And Jesus told us to ask because**
  - **Asking for bread is a daily reminder that our lives, like our bread, are gifts from God**
  - **Just like the gift of manna in the wilderness given to the wandering Jews (Exodus 16), we too would perish were it not for the daily, mundane, essential gifts of God**
- **And when we gather, as today, for the Lord's Supper, we are faced with a reality that is far too deep for words**
  - **It's a reality 'too true' to be a mere matter of noble ideas or religious inclinations**
  - **This faith of ours does its business in bread and wine and water and, frankly, flesh**
  - **We worship a God who takes things nitty gritty - bread, wine, water, us - and transforms them into signs of divine presence**
  - **Holy Communion is a sign of divine presence**
  - **Baptism is a sign of divine presence**
  - **And we can become carriers of the Holy Spirit, reflections of divinity**
    - **Not some humanist's version of an internal 'divine spark' but people of Jesus who carry forth the cause of Christ - the Body of Christ is the Church, we are carrying forth Christ into our world**
- **So, when we are asked what we believe about God, we Christians should not project, I think, a set of doctrine, or talking points about God - we should demonstrate the effect of our faith**
  - **By pointing to a group of former strangers, perhaps even enemies, who are eating together around a table as a family, an experience we call 'Eucharist'**
  - **Or taking the questioner down to a river where folk are descending into waters, dying to their old selves, rising as new creations, something we call "baptism"**
  - **A table, a loaf of bread, wine or grape juice, water sprinkled, all ways our Lord has intruded upon the world, claiming it as His own - our faith is materialistic, rooted in earthy reality**
- **On Easter, two despondent disciples walked on a dirt road to the small village of Emmaus**
  - **A stranger joined them, and asked them why they were so depressed?**
  - **Incredulously, they asked the stranger if he might be the only one in all Jerusalem who hadn't heard of Jesus of Nazareth and what had happened over the past week? And they began to share the events with the stranger**
  - **[Read Luke 24:28-31a]**
- **When we want to meet Jesus, we Christians *don't***
  - **Go up on some holy mountain**

    - **Rummage around in our psyches with Shirley Maclain**
- **What we *do* is gather and break bread in Jesus' name**
    - **That's where he has chosen to meet us**
    - **That's where our eyes are opened and we recognize him**
- **And we don't pray 'Give us this day our daily bread' to survive; we know that no matter how much bread we consume, we are mortal**
    - **In praying for daily bread, we are praying for the daily presence of God among us**
- **A group of students some years ago spent a week at a Trappist Monastery**
    - **At evening meal, enjoying in silence the wonderful, delicious bread, one student blurted out "Hey, did we make this bread or did somebody give it to us?'**
    - **One of the monks answered, 'Yes.'**
- **When we ask God for bread, we are acknowledging our dependence on God, and our interdependence with others**
- **We are not self-sufficient, autonomous**
- **Indeed, it is through bread, wine, water, our worship together**
    - **That is where we meet Jesus**

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